

Commercial Saloon  
Clifton Townsite  
Park Avenue  
Clifton  
Greenlee County  
Arizona

HABS No. AZ-189

HABS  
ARIZ  
6-CLIFT,  
20-

PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Western Region  
Department of the Interior  
San Francisco, California 94107

HAB5  
ARIZ  
6-CLIFT,  
20-

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

COMMERCIAL SALOON

HAB5 No. AZ-189

**Location:**

Clifton Townsite, Park Avenue, Clifton, Greenlee County, Arizona

**Significance:**

Associated with commerce in Clifton and the development of Clifton.

**Description:**

This brick building is among several commercial structures along Park Avenue, and was built in the Commercial style. The building is brick with a low-pitch gable roof and a parapet at the southwest front. The original storefront has been entirely infilled with modern masonry. The front parapet has three false window openings. A new entrance has been made in the southeast side of the building. A large garage door also appears at the southeast side. Two small windows and a single door appear at the northeast back. The southeast side and southwest front of the building have been sheathed with stucco.

**History:**

This one story brick building was constructed ca. 1890 by Salvatore Sirianni. Its first use was as a public hall but by 1901 the need for drinking establishments in Clifton had increased to the point that Sirianni converted it to the Commercial Saloon. In later years it saw use as a movie theater, which accounts for its present appearance with an Art Deco facade. Most recently, it has served as a warehouse for the El Rancho Distributing Company.

Salvatore Sirianni was an early Clifton businessman and a leader of the strong Italian community in the town. Salvatore passed away in 1903, but his sons Thomas and Luis took over operation of the saloon. The building was converted briefly to a theater for "moving pictures" in 1908 but soon returned to use as a saloon. With the advent of prohibition in Arizona in 1915, Thomas and Luis Sirianni converted the building into the "Commercial Lodging House and Billiard Hall." In the late twenties Frank Martin acquired the building and changed its use back into a motion picture theater. Known as the "East Side Theater," the building was used by Martin until the 1940s. Frank Martin, a former mayor of Clifton, got his start as the collection agent for the Arizona Copper Company store. In recent years the El Rancho Distributing Company has used the building as a warehouse.<sup>1</sup>

**Sources (endnotes):**

1. Copper Era April 9, 1903 (I, 3: 2); December 13, 1906 (I, 1: 1-5); August 19, 1909 (I, 3: 1); May 6, 1910 (I, 2: 4); Interview with A.V. Fernandez, former Mayor of Clifton, December 16, 1993; 1920 Arizona business directory.

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